

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for operating a digital television receiver,
which comprises:

providing a digital television receiver performing a

5 Digital TV function;

storing a plurality of advertisement messages in a
storage device;

10 subsequent to storing the plurality of the
advertisement messages, using the digital television
receiver to receive video data from a digital television
service provider;

15 with the digital television receiver, outputting the
plurality of the advertisement messages and the received
video data; and

20 if a predetermined number of the plurality of the
advertisement messages has been output, then disabling
the digital TV function of the digital television
receiver.

2. The method according to claim 1, which comprises:

5 after the digital TV function has been disabled, storing a new set of the plurality of advertisement messages in the storage device; and subsequently

enabling the digital TV function of the digital television receiver.

3. The method according to claim 2, which comprises performing the step of storing the new set of the plurality of the advertisement messages in the storage device by downloading the new set of the plurality of the advertisement 5 messages from a network.

4. The method according to claim 1, which comprises setting the predetermined number such that all of the plurality of the advertisement messages that were stored will be output.

5. The method according to claim 1, which comprises performing the outputting step such that the plurality of the advertisement messages that were stored are output as banner advertisement messages together with the received video data.

6. The method according to claim 1, which comprises providing the storage device as a component of the digital television receiver.

7. The method according to claim 1, which comprises performing the step of storing the plurality of the advertisement messages by downloading the plurality of the advertisement messages from a network.

8. The method according to claim 1, which comprises:

5 receiving additional video data from the digital television service provider;

with the digital television receiver, outputting the additional video data without outputting the plurality of the advertisement messages; and

10 limiting a duration that the step of outputting the additional video without outputting the plurality of the advertisement messages can be performed.

9. The method according to claim 8, which comprises performing the limiting step by:

initializing a counter to a predetermined value;

5 incrementing the counter by an amount corresponding
to an amount of time that the step of outputting the
plurality of the advertisement messages and the received
video data is being performed;

10 decrementing the counter by an amount corresponding
to an amount of time that the step of outputting the
additional video without outputting the plurality of the
advertisement messages is being performed; and

15 when the counter reaches the predetermined value,
discontinuing the step of outputting the additional video
without outputting the plurality of the advertisement
messages.

10. The method according to claim 9, which comprises
providing zero as the predetermined value.

11. The method according to claim 9, which comprises
providing the counter as a component of the digital television
receiver.

12. A digital television receiver, comprising:

5 a video decoder for decoding received video bit
streams of a selected program to obtain decoded video bit
streams of the selected program;

a banner storage device for storing data
 representing advertisement messages and thereby obtaining
 stored data;

10 a banner rendering unit for decoding and rendering
 the stored data to obtain rendered data;

15 a video reconstruction unit for combining the
 rendered data with the decoded video bit streams of the
 selected program to obtain a combined video output signal
 that includes information representing the selected
 program;

20 a banner manager unit for reading out the stored
 data from said banner storage device and for providing
 the stored data to said banner rendering unit, said
 banner manager unit generating a disable signal when a
 predetermined number of the advertisement messages,
 represented by the stored data, have been read out from
 the banner storage device; and

25 an output terminal connected to said video
 reconstruction unit for receiving the combined video
 output signal and for outputting the combined video
 output signal.

13. The television receiver according to claim 12,
comprising:

5 a system control unit for receiving the disable
signal and, in response thereto, for prohibiting said
output terminal from receiving the information
representing the selected program.

14. The television receiver according to claim 12,
comprising:

5 a counter having a value that is incremented as the
rendered data is combined with the decoded video bit
streams of the selected program in said video
reconstruction unit;

10 said video reconstruction unit also configured to
selectively output the information representing the
selected program without the rendered data;

15 said value of said counter being decremented in
proportion to an amount of time during which said video
reconstruction unit is outputting the information
representing the selected program without the rendered
data; and

when the value of said counter reaches a predetermined lower limit value, said video reconstruction unit being prohibited from outputting the information representing the selected program without the rendered data.

15. The television receiver according to claim 12, comprising a network adapter for downloading the stored data into said banner storage device from an external network.